issues related to conflicts and the effects of such on the behavioural aspects of the child. Such an approach will enable the teachers to identify the possible solutions for problems resulting from conflicts and stresses. These activities could include model lesson planning, methods of lesson planning, methods of resource identification, evaluation and testing instruments, group dynamics etc.

Thus the above sub- themes would require a number of activities to cover all the objectives identified. These activities could be in the form of QAS. However, it depends on the time available. The idea is to provide the practice of understanding the background of the child in the context of his environment, which includes the classroom and the community. When the skills are understood/grasped, the application would become clear for the teacher.

The next step in the program was **developing formats/instruments** to carry out activities in the field or in a classroom, to give the practice to the teachers, in this case to the MTs. The latter used these to train the TT in the workshop held in Yakwalang. These formats/instruments were carefully developed and time permitting, should be pre-tested. These should help the participants, both TT and later teachers, to understand clearly and develop the skills of children in war torn societies and conflicts and suffering from varying levels of deprivations. The social implications have to be properly understood to enable the teacher to know that his role begins at the classroom and the unlimited responsibilities that he has to share in the upliftment of the Afghan society.

Example of a format for QAS - only major areas are identified and the sequence could be changed to fit into the need.

- identify children (5-7), ages 5-12, from different backgrounds such as returnees, motherless, fatherless, family complexities, girls and boys
- discussion/familirisation process
- identifying distresses
- finding key causes for distresses/loss of family members/displacement/threats/forced labour and molestation's
- finding precise feelings/emotional disturbances of the case if remembered/ incidents/ where/how/what/who/when
- identifying current situation/visible changes/risks etc.
- collaboration with elders
- understanding social/economic background of the case
- suggestions for prevention and rehabilitation
- understanding the need for special care/love/attachment of the teacher/headmaster
- collaboration with the community
- importance of understanding the child

This could be further refined and formatted to suit the specific issue and context.

Summary

The above discussion has emphasised the significance of understanding the child in conflicts. The focus of teaching that is prevailing all over Afghanistan is on the content matter, entirely loosing the sight of the child. Understanding John is more important than teaching John. How this could be achieved and the factors that influence the behaviour of the child

are the areas to which the attention of the teacher is drawn, in the above section. The various factors that are influencing the behaviour of the child in conflict situations have to be understood very carefully by the pedagogue, if he is to be successful in the school. Developing the relevant skills of the teacher is important and the methods that could be used, have been discussed, within the limitations of this document. The reader is requested to add more to the list of activities suggested in the training programs.

II. Classroom management under stress

Rationale for stress management

The second theme identified for this workshop was on 'Classroom management under stress'. This needs explanation. Stress is universal in Afghanistan. It pervades all aspects of life of the community and there is no escape from this, for anyone. Schools are subjected to various forms of stresses resulting from lack of materials, infra structure, text books, children from deprived and conflict situations, constant migration and displacements. Teachers face personal stresses and are caught up in a scenario beyond their control. All these have adverse effects on the management of classrooms. However, the teachers should not use these as excuses for any of his shortcomings in the management of the classroom. Hence, the importance of guiding the teacher to adopt strategies to overcome the issues of stressful management, at least to some extent. For the child, the teacher is the saviour. The teacher is the one who could help the nation to overcome the current tragedies of conflict in the decades to come by educating the children. This vital role of the teacher has to be supported, strengthened and fostered by those responsible for the development of education. Hence the reason for introducing this theme in the training program.

In teacher education programs the emphasis is on the methodology and classroom management is taken for granted. This may be relevant in countries with less stresses than in Afghanistan. Ignoring and negligence of stress issues, with emphasis mainly on pedagogical aspects is a universal character in teacher training programs. It may be that the stress factors of the scale and magnitude of the ones prevalent in Afghanistan in affecting the management of classrooms are not found in most countries. Even when and where these exists, stresses are subsumed under methodologies and good teaching is associated with efficient management. It means that a teacher who performs his tasks well, will have fewer worries and all issues related to management will be solved . It is also possible to devolve classroom management, where student monitors and school prefects take the responsibility to bring the house to order, in the absence of teachers. But this is associated with managing discipline than with stress management. Stress factors are more psychosocial than discipline. It is more superficial in the context of classroom management. Discipline could be achieved through coercion, force or covert methods in order to overcome indiscipline in a classroom, invariably using the stick without the carrot. Stress management demands more understanding and counseling.

Managing stress is more deep and cannot be left in the hands of children, who are also subjects of stress. Stress in most situations is not visible and the stresses of children and teachers are hidden and covered under imposed mannerisms, smiles and formalities of the classroom. In the context of Afghanistan stress is more visible and is all over which has been emphasised and analysed in the previous theme, 'Understanding children under con-

flicts'. This is why the stress factor in classroom management is considered important to be discussed under a special area, in order to drive home the point clearly to the teachers. In fact classroom stresses are further aggravated by the stresses of the teachers themselves, who are equally vulnerable to these situations. Hence the importance of this aspect in Afghanistan.

Classroom management under stress includes **sub-themes** such as

a) stresses of the teacher,

b) stresses of the institution,

c) stresses of the students,

d) learning stresses,

e) environmental stresses,

f) stresses of the family and the community and

g) integrated stresses.

In this section the objective is to make the teacher alive to the issues of stress. It is a process of enlightenment which enables him to look at various options available in identifying suitable strategies.

Stresses of the teacher relate to his lack of professional skills, remuneration aspects such as being low paid, not paid for months or not paid at all, lack of teaching materials which includes texts books, guide books, basic stationery, the overcrowded nature of the classroom with no furniture and other needs. Lack of professional support from the principal is another cause of concern for the teacher. Neither does the teacher receive support from the parents, for the latter have their own stresses, which too adds to the woes of the teacher. Thus one would see a whole spectrum of issues that a teacher has to face in classroom management, with dimensions stretching both inside and outside the classroom. In a situation as in Afghanistan, the teacher cannot ignore the issues of the immediate community and the country, for it has direct bearings on the student and school. The issues occur almost daily. Internal displacement is one such key issue. Edicts issued by the rulers have caused constraints on the people from time to time. Lack of food and other essentials for daily living add more to these stresses.

Stresses of the institutions are concerned with the needs related to furniture, space, materials, teachers, professional competencies, student absenteeism, disinterestedness of the community, constant migrations and internal displacements, lack basic needs. The attitude of the principal is another factor that may or may not add to the stresses of the teacher.

Stresses of the students are concerned with the traumas and inability to cope with long hours of concentration. Death of beloved ones in the family, absence of guardians are two of the psychological stresses that children in Afghanistan face regularly. They too face the issue of lack of materials such as text books, writing materials, furniture and recreation equipment. Proper teaching, understanding of their problems by the teacher, absence of proper evaluation and certification and absence of peace of culture are but a few of these stresses.

Learning stresses are related to the above. But these are aggravated further due to the lack of basic needs and the feeling of wasting their precious hours in schools lingering without hope of a better life in the near future, which is shrouded in doubts, fears and conflicts.

Environmental stresses are factors that relate to war and conflicts. Land mines are not only stresses but deadly as well, which takes a great toll of the children. Lack of schools in the vicinity and the issues related to the deprivation of girl's education are two key factors in this connection. The absence of motivation from the environment is a very glaring stress that the students, teachers and the principals experience daily. The dilemma relates to the diversion of funds to the war machine, while there is absolutely no money even to procure basic needs of the school. Mere dreams of peace is in itself a stress.

Family stresses and the stresses of the community are the ones that are concerned with security and pressures thrust upon them by the various rulers at various times for unknown reasons. In turn these affect adversely on their children by way of the interest, support and care for the education of the child. Internal displacement, migration, loss of property and valuables, presence of disabled children/ elders cause untold stresses to the family.

Integrated stresses are the combined effects of all of the above on the child, which gives him a sense of insecurity and lack of confidence.

What are the strategies that could be developed to over come these problems? From which point should one commence in solving these issues? Could the teacher alone attend to these issues or should he integrate his abilities with other resource persons ? If so how and who could these persons be ? These are some of the key questions that could be raised in the context of identifying solutions. Basically the teacher should not be too ambitious in identifying solutions. He should realise his limitations and the expectations of the child and the community.

In the training of the teachers they should **identify objectives** for all of the above sub-themes from a) to g). The purpose of this exercise is to make the teacher to understand in greater detail the issues and be clear about the complexity of the issues that confront him in the teaching learning process. For example the objectives that could be set for the sub-theme " stresses of the teacher" (sub theme 01 above) would be as follows:-

1. To identify the nature of the stresses of the teacher
2. To look into the factors that cause him more stresses
3. To compare the stresses of the teacher with that of the others
4. To find out whether the teacher had ever discussed these issues with colleagues/ superiors etc.

The objectives could be suitably adjusted to the issues that confront the teacher in his environment.

In addition, as was attempted earlier in theme one, a number of practical activities should be developed to enable the teacher to work on them, providing him opportunities for better insights into the issues. Thus studying a) his own activities / reactions in relation to stress management b) studying the approaches of his colleagues in the school and in other schools c) discussions of the above with the principal and colleagues. etc. are few examples in this

context. Similar activities should be developed for all of the sub- themes identified earlier. These form part of the QAS referred to earlier, which enables the teacher to go deep into the problem and look at the issues from different perspectives.

One could identify two main areas of operation mitigating these stress factors. These relate to a) delivery approaches and b) classroom organisation

a) Delivery approaches

Since stresses cause management problems leading to disturbances in the learning process, the teacher should adopt highly innovative practices in teaching to overcome these problems. The focus of teacher should not necessarily be on the content covered but on the ability to assist the students to comprehend the concepts. Although this may lead to slowing the rate of progress of covering the content, the learning process could become attractive and motivating. For this to become effective, different techniques using local resources/ materials should be adopted. This will reduce tension factors in the classroom by creating a student friendly atmosphere. What is important in a country like Afghanistan is to make more children participate and remain in the system for longer periods. For this the classroom should be devoid of stress factors and the key rests on the teacher. If his teaching is miserable and approaches are equally deplorable not only the students will find the atmosphere dull with negative reactions, the parents would prefer to keep the child away from the school. Further, the teacher too would prefer to be away from the classroom feeling the dullness due to the negative reactions of the students. One should not forget the fact that most teachers are professionally unqualified and lack the skills to develop alternative approaches. It will lead to mutual negative reactions frustrating both the teacher and the student. **The teacher should realise that the school is perhaps the only stable institution available in the community, where peace prevails and children are acceptable. The role of the teacher should be of a crusader welcoming and attracting the child into his lap.** If the atmosphere of the classroom is appealing there will be less child soldiers. To attract the child and keep him away from becoming a prey of the war lords a variety of innovative modalities should be adopted, instead of the maintenance methods, which assist to maintain the status quo. Thus, improvement of the delivery aspects will lead to reducing the stress factors in the management of classrooms.

Some examples related to the above would be to make the children to work outside the classroom, assisting them in creative work, working in groups, competitions, inviting local resource persons etc.

b) Classroom organisation

In Afghan situation it is rare that proper classrooms are available, if available at all. In fact, this is so even in most of the developing countries. Ideal classrooms are yet luxuries in these countries and will remain so, for years to come. Tents, empty containers, shades of tress, rented out houses, compounds of houses, village gardens and such temporary arrangement are the common centres of learning in Afghanistan. Albeit, these seem to be very crude and lacking privacy, yet provide a relatively better opportunity, where there is none. The stresses are further aggravated by the internal composition of the classroom, where children of different age groups sit in the same class. When teachers have to engineer learning tasks for a

number of grades simultaneously, it further adds to the complexity of learning and teaching. Classroom management includes minor administrative tasks such as keeping the register, daily record book, reports, other books and materials in order, in addition to cleanliness, safety, coordination with the other classes and the principals office and keeping to the norms of the school. All these are responsibilities of the teacher, some of which he could devolve to students. This is where the capacity of the teacher should emerge.

Should he under these adverse situations of lack of resources remain aloof and adopt a negative attitude or be a resourceful person attempting to make the best use of the available resources? Should he not accept the challenges? How can the teacher become empowered to seek solutions to the ever-increasing problems? Should he not challenge the challenges, adopting the principle of attack as the best form of defense? These are some of the few questions that could be raised in the area of classroom management under stress. In fact, the process involved relates to crisis management. Teachers in Afghanistan should be challenging to overcome these constraints. They should not succumb to these problems, for these will remain so, for a long time. The school system has to live with these issues and solutions cannot be found elsewhere, other than in the classroom itself. Attempts to use alien methods may be temporary and even complicate the issues, once such assistance is withdrawn. Even in the face of failure the teachers should forge ahead, for only through self-effort is it that solutions based on indigenous strategies could be found out.

The methods of classroom management should focus on how to relieve stresses of the student. His fears should be reduced and personal attention provided, as far as possible. The teacher being an adult, should place his frustrations and failures as secondary to that of the child. It is here that collaboration with his colleagues and workers in the school becomes important. Informal and friendly discussions with them about the stress issues would bring new ideas for solutions from the colleagues. Even mere discussions with them would relieve pressure from ones mind, that there was some one to listen to the woes. It is way of sharing of feelings, providing therapy to ease the pressure.

Table 1

Summary of the approaches to solving management stresses

Issue	Resources available	Strategy	Process
Lack of classroom/ space	alternative space/garden/tent/shade	shift in/grouping / whole group/ small group / individual	Verbal/non verbal/activity/ reporting/recording/ presentation/whole class
Composition multi class/grade/age	single teacher/mature students/ colleagues/env	grouping to ability/ interest / identify key concepts/ integrate to reality	diff. places for diff.grps/ rotation of teacher/repeat till fixed/create interest
Lack of texts	teacher's knowledge/principal's capacity/ UNHCR guide book	developing self texts based on concepts/key contents/ teacher cum text	identify concepts, key contents for each grade, subject/ write lesson notes/discuss with principal/ commence teaching
Lack of materials - pencil/paper/note book black board/ chalk etc.	throw away materials/ local env.materials	use of local materials/ visual presentations/demonstrations/ traditional forms/ slow paces	Verbal/rote learning/peer learn/discussion/ demonstrate/ group work
Psychosocial issues child	maturity of the teacher/elders of the village/institution to meet/children/ attachment figures	informal meetings/ winning confidence/identifying causes/ meeting elders	smiles/words of love/ attachments/ fairness/ tolerance/ classroom 2nd home/ guidance councelling/ earn/work/learn/listening
- teacher	children/leadership roles/ social status/ responsibility	focus on child/look for additional sources for income/ self evaluation of the tragedies/ avoidance of projecting personal tragedies	Positive thinking/accepting challenges giving the best to Afghanistan

III. Concept based approach to teaching and learning

Why concept based ?

The third theme of the workshop was on the concept based approach to teaching. Although the approach is new, the practice has been in vogue, though specifically not referred to in the development of lessons and teaching procedures. In this approach the emphasis is on the concepts rather than on pure contents of a subject. The traditional approach has been on specific contents. In the case of the text books used in Afghanistan teaching/learning is based on rather loosely connected facts. The lessons are on topics and the latter could be on anything to every thing, which do not necessarily bring out a coordination in the learning process. Concept approach enables the teacher to develop learning to be more organised and a meaningful. It helps to desegregate the major concept or idea into sub units/parts, so that all details will be taken care of in the teaching process, not loosing woods for the forest. The detail analysis helps the teacher to understand the composition of the elements that go to form the gestalt of the concept. This leads to a better relationship in the understanding of the lessons and coordination of the ideas. The new approach helps the teacher to plan out his teaching more perfectly and achieve his objectives. It is a process of knowing the parts, which enables the teacher not to miss any element in the concept. This enables the teacher to understand why and what he is teaching more precisely and the exact focus of his lessons. A concept approach enables the teacher to fix in the child the understanding of a concept better. It further helps the teacher to know the key elements in the subjects and fine tune his strategies. When the concepts /key elements of a subject are known and understood by the teacher, he could develop his own methods and plans, even in the absence of text books.

How does this facilitate the learning process of the child? The child will see the relationships of learning of one idea with the other. It will not be fragmented as it is in conventional teaching/learning processes. The learning will be like that of a wall, one brick firmly attached to the other, making the wall firm and form the structure. This is different from the traditional approach where the contents are like the bricks just left without cementing to form the wall. A concept approach helps to understand the heirachy of the progress of the concepts from a level of ease and basics to more difficult levels. It helps the teacher to develop a table of specifications and see to himself the progress of the child and the areas of weaknesses, enabling him to adopt remedial teaching when necessary. Skill development could be achieved better because the teacher will know the specific skills to be developed. In other words, a concept based approach is a self-understanding teaching learning process. An example from language would help to understand the concept approach better. Listening is one of the concepts in the learning of language in the primary grades. In the traditional teaching process listening is considered as an idea to be learnt and not a skill to be developed. Skill development becomes secondary in this aspect. The teaching and evaluation of this concept will become dull and relatively less effective in real situations. Further, the detail elements that go to form the concept of listening will not be taken care of or missed due to lack of awareness of the detail elements.

Under the new approach focus will be on identifying the major concept followed by analysis of the sub-concepts and ideas. This helps the teacher to develop a heirachy of the sub-concepts and look into the finer details. Thus the concept of 'listening' will consist of a

number of sub-concepts such as understanding, comprehension, cooperation, attention, respect, differentiation, categorisation, discrimination, imitation, all of which will assist in the understanding of the concept of 'listening'. In developing lessons all these aspects have to be taken care of, if the concept of 'listening' has to be properly understood. It also means that appropriate strategies and delivery systems should be developed to make the child understand the concept of 'listening' in totality. Thus a concept/sub-concept approach helps to break down the macro idea into micro elements, leading to easy conceptualisation and better understanding of the concept.

Acquisition of knowledge

It should be stressed that most of the knowledge that children acquire at school is alien to the individual way of their thinking and school knowledge is 'some ones else's knowledge'. Knowledge that is acquired through one's own action becomes assimilated greater in the minds of children. As the knowledge acquired is highly compartmentalised, pedagogical strategies should be developed ' that will encourage the progressive mastery by all children of transverse skills'. When a child is confronted with a problem or with a concept, the first step is to 'build a representation' of the problem/concept whereby detail features of the concept/problem are identified, which are referred to in this documents as sub- concepts. This would be followed by encoding these sub-concepts. This is where the role of the teacher is important in assisting the child to do something in practice to understand the sub-concepts. The teacher should take into account that the minds of children are not empty and that they carry with them knowledge and skills that have been built up spontaneously. Teachers should encourage ' syntonic learning', meaning an emotional response to the environment of the child, instead of the 'dissociated learning'. Concept approach to teaching/learning facilitates syntonic learning better. It helps to understand the existence of the micro aspects of an issue, with its blocks of knowledge.

Guiding steps for the teacher

Having discussed the details of a concept it is of relevance to look into the modus operandi of identifying the concepts and the methodology of using these in teaching learning situations. The steps involved in guiding teachers would be as follows:

1. Explanation of the concept, what it means and the definitions as discussed above.

This aspect will require time and should be done in slow paces providing as many as examples possible, as the understanding of the concept is the key to the development of the subsequent activities. The process of explanation would be in small steps. For example the concept of a chair would mean the components that go to form the chair i.e. the hands, legs, seat, back seat etc. make the chair different from that of a table or any other household item. These components are the sub-items/sub-concepts of the concept of a chair. Identifying these micro elements facilitates the understanding of the concept better.

2. Careful study of the text books for each grade and each subject.

At the workshop held for this purpose, the text books developed by the University of Nebraska, Omaha (UNO) were used. Although there were limitations and drawbacks in these books , these were the most widely used ones in Afghanistan by NGO's and UN agencies. In addition, these books were available for all grades up to 8, for all the subjects. Hence the

facility to study a series rather than a few books, for a limited number of grades. This exercise need time for discussions. The teachers should be grouped according to the subject specialty of the person. The subjects included mathematics, language, religion, social studies, and science. Generally, teachers do not study the full text before hand but only wait till the last moment to find out what should follow the previous lesson taught. A complete study of the text helps the teacher to know the vision of the book, relationships of ideas and the ultimate objective/s of the text.

3. Identifying the key concepts/essential facts in the above subjects, gradewise.

It would be appropriate to understand what a concept means in the context of teaching/ learning processes. A concept defined in this context refers to elements that compose or constitute of a learning situation/ object/ item that is to be engineered to a group of children. It is something that could be seen or unseen, tangible or intangible.

At the end of the operation in a classroom situation, the learning process should lead to a change of behaviour in the child, indicating that the concept was understood properly and effectively. This stage helps to understand properly the elements of the concept. For this to be achieved, it is essential that the teachers develop awareness and the skills in the analysis of the concepts and its sub-concepts. In certain subjects and situations these concepts may be referred to as essential facts.

Study of the texts will assist in the identification of the key concepts/essential facts. The learning program of a child will consist of these concepts/essential facts. These should follow a graded sequence: from simple to complex, increasing the levels of competencies with age groups. If texts are developed scientifically these should be composed of concepts in a graded manner, if not as in the case of some texts used in Afghanistan, the teachers have to identify the missing concepts and bring better understanding of the concepts in the students. This would be the first step in the direction of analysing the sub concepts. When these aspects are studied in one subject, over a number of grades, the teachers would get a comprehensive understanding of the progression of the concepts and essential facts.

Under normal circumstances the teachers, perhaps, may know only of the contents of one or two subjects in one or more grades: and these grades/subjects may not necessarily be consecutive grades or same subjects. Hence the inability of the teacher to get a clear perception of the increase in the quantum of learning. This makes it difficult for the teachers to develop a comprehensive and effective learning program. On the other hand, the concept approach of teaching/learning enables a teacher to understand the key factors/learning situations that he has to operate for the benefit of the student, over a stipulated period of time. In the absence of proper texts and trained personnel, there are a number of advantages of following the concept approach in a country like Afghanistan. If the concepts to be taught are known and understood clearly, the **teachers could be mobile texts and curriculum developers** and become very resourceful in deprived environments. Thus, this approach provides many advantages for those teachers in conflict and stressful situations to overcome the lack of material needs, text books and professional training.

4. Identifying the sub-concepts/sub-facts that are closely related to the above in 2.

This stage is vital, in that the teachers have to think what exactly should be included in the

Issue Focussed Teacher Education
Hand book for Teacher Educators in Afghanistan

1. Why issue specific ?

Teacher education is considered universally, as the key input to quality education. Absence of professionally qualified persons, leads to mediocre teaching and learning becomes a nightmare for the child. Unqualified teachers find themselves unable to contend with the dilemma of organising their teaching effectively to motivate children achieve the required competencies and move up the higher grades ladder. When this does not happen the tendency is for children drop out early from the school, perhaps having gained little or nothing from their stay. Such trends increase the cost of education by wasting scarce resources. The latter becomes a burden on the exchequers of the developing countries. More important is the loss of human resources potential which is left untapped. The quality of life of the people suffers as a consequence and is reflected in later years. The significance of the teaching learning process at the classroom level and the importance of teacher education, must be underscored among the important national issues. This is more true in the developing countries, specially those that are facing conflicts and internal power struggles.

In such societies the role of education vis-a-vis development is lost sight of in the midst of other problems and as a consequence the quality of the education programs suffers most. Dropping out of children, non-participation, misdirected education, gaps in evaluation etc. becomes the order of the day. When these trends last for long periods additional problems emerge such as the development of a culture opposed to learning in the light of an absence of examples of persons who have benefited from education. Such trends lead societies to corrupt in dictatorial governance, violation of human rights, fanaticism and chaos in civil society. The combined effects of all these lead to stagnation in development .

Development of education

In general education programs have universal norms and approaches but these have to be suitably adjusted to local needs. When programs are not contextualised these tend to obstruct the development process of a nation. Such programs tend to turn out misfits. The cycles/ years of schooling, evaluation systems, teacher education programs, psychological theories are some of the areas where contextulisation becomes important. What has been developed elsewhere, per se, may be irrelevant. It has to be rationally critiqued and adapted. Education systems are subject to much criticisms and invariably blamed for all the problems of a country. Teacher education, which is at the bottom line, face the brunt of these criticisms, indicating the vital role of the teacher and the responsibility imposed shown upon them by society. Thus the significance of teacher education in the development of education in a country, as properly guided teachers would be valuable asset who could cover and substitute other gaps, resulting from a lack of resources. This is especially true of Afghanistan.

When teacher education follows alien models and theories it can result in anamolies in the education system. Theories developed elsewhere, based on experiments carried out in the western world, both in psychology and education, form the basis of teacher education in developing countries. Due to a lack of resources for basic research, it is rare that learning

details. The examples of sub-concepts, in relation to the concept of reading as given above, explains that it is a process of identifying the finer details of an item, so that one gets a clear picture of the whole with as many constituents as possible/appropriate. This helps to understand the concept better. It means that the sub items should be self explanatory and assist in the understanding of the key concept/essential facts. These also help the teacher to formulate the detailed lesson plans, time budgeting, materials development, evaluation and relating or bringing and bridging with the next sub concept. It is a ladder formation. The flow of understanding of the progression of lessons would be continuous and gaps between one stage and another should be avoided, although it may not be possible to eliminate, though that would be the ideal. Identifying sub-concepts provides the teacher to bring clarity to his thinking and also bring new dimensions in developing lessons, focussing on the needs of the area and contextualising learning.

5. Developing explanatory notes for the teacher to provide better understanding of the concepts/sub-concepts/essential facts/sub-facts.

The purpose of these explanations is to provide more detailed information and guidance for the teacher in the understanding of the concepts better, in the context of the totality of the subject for a particular grade. Explanations provide the teacher with a broader outlook of the subject. In a hand book, this aspect plays a key role. Since this is a new approach it is very desirable that explanations of these concepts and sub-concepts are provided to the teacher. Otherwise, he may be confused and explanations would help to understand of what has to be taught to the child better. As stated earlier, such explanations would guide the teacher to plan out his teaching. It will also make him to bring out the resourcefulness in him and develop confidence to take initiatives. The explanatory notes would guide the teacher to broaden his understanding of the concepts and the tasks that are a head of him, as well. In a country like Afghanistan where resource persons as well as materials are invariably absent, explanations properly articulated will go a long way, to help the teacher to understand without much assistance.

6. Developing objectives for each of the key concepts identified.

Developing objectives enables the teacher to identify the targets for each concept/sub-concept and makes it certain that there is no repetition or duplication in the lessons developed. Clarity of the objectives assists in the development of the lesson plan, as well as in the evaluation stage. Development of materials and assignments also could be planned if the objectives are clear. Objectives based on concepts indicated should be achievable. Consideration should be given to local needs and resources in the identification of the objectives. It is very important that the objectives set for a concept should bring out new knowledge, skills and emotional balance in the students. The last item is very important in the context of Afghanistan, where people have lost caring for others, including fauna and flora.

7. Analysis of the teachers tasks.

This section enables the teacher to be very clear as to what his responsibilities are in relation to the teaching tasks. These include not only lesson planning but also organising materials and planning field work such as group work, out door activities, field studies, creative programs. The tasks of the teacher should be to see that the objectives set for each concept/sub -concept is achieved. These include the components of the three domains indicated above.

In addition, achieving tolerance and cooperation should be included and the teacher should facilitate the achievement of these concepts. These are vital to the people of Afghanistan. The tasks of the teacher would include giving clear instructions to the students about what should be brought to class/field, who should do what, identifying support materials/resource persons, assistance from colleagues/ neighborhood, identifying locations and matching objectives with the tasks. The purpose of the teachers' tasks would include using appropriate methods to develop the personality of the child, assist in the emotional balance and culture of peace and understanding of his environment.

8. Identifying students tasks.

A concept based approach facilitates the development of tasks for the students. The tasks could be easily based on the sub- concepts/ themes enabling the students to understand the different levels of progression. Thus, along with the teacher's tasks one should be clear as to what the students should be doing, during specific times. Their tasks have to be clearly defined for the teacher to figure out the relevant materials and evaluation procedures. When their tasks are clearly defined the teacher can be very confident that the lesson will follow a clearly set path. Identifying student's tasks before hand will also enable the teacher to locate field activities. For example, the student tasks would include bringing of necessary tools with him, being on time, if field work, bag/s for collection of materials etc. The teacher should assist the child to understand the concepts through interactions and not by mere listening. Hence the students activities should allow them to discover following the ancient Chinese principle of ' I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do I know, I discover I use'. Concept based approach should be used to provide as many opportunities as possible for the child to work individually and in-groups.

9. Evaluation.

Evaluation if properly conducted will indicate the gaps in the understanding of the sub-concepts. Testing of the students could be performed at the end of either major concept or sub-concept, as deem to be necessary. Whatever the stage at which evaluation would be conducted, the evaluation procedures should be well developed. An objective of evaluation would be to connect with the next stage/level of the concepts that the child has to study. This can be very valuable feed back and summative understanding of the level of competency of the child for the teacher to proceed to the next concept. Evaluation should be followed up with remedial action for weaker students in the different concepts. In Afghanistan, this would be very important since there are no other sources for updating the knowledge, as is seen in other countries, which have opportunities in the form of private tuition. One has also to understand the different levels of competencies of children some of whom are returnees. Since they have had better opportunities in the countries of refuge invariably their performance levels would be higher. The extent of the levels of achievement and the strategies to be adopted could be identified by proper evaluation procedures.

Summary

Concept based approach to teaching/ learning is a logical form which enables the teacher to formulate his thinking more profoundly. It enables him to grasp the elements and provides a clear meaning to what he is trying to deliver to the children. When his mind is clear about the concept the child has the benefit to learn from one who could clarify any doubts. The

teacher can provide explanation meticulously and children would benefit. Further, the level competencies that should be imparted to the children could be suitably and clearly defined making the task of the teacher easy to provide the exact quantum of learning/skills to the child. The concept approach differs from the conventional modus operandi, in that the latter depends heavily on text books and other support materials. These are precisely the materials that are lacking in the Afghan scenario, at the moment. Thus if teachers are properly guided in the concept approach the teacher could substitute many of the shortcomings. It will save the agony of the principals having to wait with stretching hands for things which are not available for Afghans in the foreseen future.

IV. Concept based materials development

Materials development was the fourth component of this training program. Materials form an important component in teaching/learning. These allow the teacher to explain concepts/ contents better and assist the student to understand what is taught in a comprehensive way. In the schools of the deprived communities and environments, as in Afghanistan, children invariably learn by listening to the teacher. Explanations through the use of materials are rare. Although the writer has visited a large number of schools all over Afghanistan he has never seen any materials/teaching aids been used by the teachers. Development of learning materials need training and basic resources, both of which are missing in Afghanistan. Where even chalk is a luxury 'talk and talk' is the only method used by the teacher.

What are materials?

Do these refer to materials bought from shops as raw materials such paper, glue, colours, tapes etc. to develop learning materials? Or do these include local resources, which are available in the environment? In relation to the Afghan scenario materials include resources in the locality, more than anything else. It means that whatever that can be used from the environment and used to augment learning and support teaching could be considered as materials. These include throw away commercial materials, such as that are bought from the market like cigarette packets, fruit drink cartons, pictures from papers/advertisements, old tyres, etc. But more from the natural environment like pebbles, leaves, flowers, sticks, mud, sand, streams, trees, birds, insects, butterflies, physical features, sky etc. Man made structures like shops, garages, old tanks, destroyed vehicles, garbage, vegetable plots, gardens, cultivated lands, animals etc are important teaching learning materials. In this connection skills in identification of such relevant materials form an important initial step. What is lacking is the ability of the teacher to identify and relate these materials, found in abundance, to the relevant concepts. Thus one could see that not only turning out materials is important but also identifying resources locally is very vital. The latter becomes important in a country like Afghanistan where alien items are not only unavailable but also costly and beyond the reach of the teacher/student. Further, these indigenous materials would be child friendly and learning would be relevant to the child. His understanding of the concepts would be better. So that in a training program on materials development for Afghan schools, the trainers should be extremely careful and skillful in providing the skills for the teacher community.

In a concept approach to teaching/learning, the first step in the direction of development/identification of materials would be to identify the concepts and essential facts, along with the sub sets for each subject/grade, as discussed earlier. For each sub- concept teaching materials could be developed or located. This should be done very carefully to avoid using too many of materials, which may have negative effects on the learning process. The child might get too engrossed with the materials and may not be able to relate them to the concepts or what is been taught. The teacher might turn out to be a magician, who shows many items without focussing on to the objectives! Even in the selection of the environment teacher should visit the location before hand to see that what is available in the locality fits in to the concepts. Otherwise field visits will turn out to be mere excursions than learning exercises. Hence the clarity of th0e selection of the materials is important. Relevance, simplicity, colourfulness, visibility, attractiveness etc. are some of the principles on which the materials should be developed.

An example of a learning situation outside the classroom and a field visit would provide the teacher of what could be done to make learning more meaningful. For example a lesson on the concept of listening could be conducted outside the classroom. Firstly identify the sub-concepts and use one or two of them for this out door activity. The next step would be to get each student to listen to different sounds in the locality. Instruct clearly to listen and identify the sound. The students should be instructed to write the sounds in the way they understand. Give them enough time to listen. Although they have heard these sounds, never have they listened patiently to identify the sounds. After the time period bring them to one place, preferably under the shade of a tree, and try to find from each the sounds they identified. This could be turned into a game where each of them would make different sounds. Later, this could be repeated in groups, where each group will act as animals/birds/others and make the relevant sounds. Isn't this fun?

In the case of a field visit it has to be organised properly. Here too identification of the concept is the first step. For example a lesson in social studies which requires the children to study the people serving them in different capacities. The teacher should meet the concerned people before hand, who are in proximity to the school. These persons should be informed in advance about the purpose of the visit and what they expect from them. The students should be too briefed as to what they should find out in relation to the objectives of the lesson. The students could be grouped and different responsibilities could be given to each group. Materials that should be taken with them should be clearly stated. If necessary co-opt another teacher with the permission of the principal. The whole plan should be discussed with the principal for approval and guidance. On the return from the field visit, the teacher should get the groups to write the reports and present these in the classroom. This approach has many other benefits such as getting the children to understand the importance of cooperation, tolerance, providing leadership, permitting confidence building etc. in addition to making the child understand the concept better.

3. Supportive programs

In addition to the above specific programs which were focussing on the practices that were directly related to improving the quality of teaching learning, it was felt that additional directions in the overall management of a workshop/training programs would improve the efficiency of the teacher training program. In this connection the following aspects were included to enrich the TT. These included

a) organisational skill
b) b) planning programs
c) c)innovative approaches and d) methods and principles in working with adult groups.

a) **Organisational skills.** As TT from Afghanistan (Yakwalang) were likely to be less experienced in conducting training and organising workshops, a component of organisational skills/methods was also introduced. Conditions in Afghanistan are very different from that of most of other countries. These relate to communication problems, tribal/ethnic differences, political conflicts, lack of transport and other basic logistics, materials including a lack of a culture of professional development. In such situations organisation of workshops and training programs would be extremely difficult, as ideal conditions do not prevail. In addition, extremes of weather is a natural hazard. These factors have to be taken into consideration in organising activities and invariably the process would be slow and sometimes frustrating. For example consider the experience the writer had in the conducting of the workshop in Yakawalang, Central Highlands. It was found that the TT participating from two adjoining districts had to walk 60 and 100 km. Respectively, to reach the training centre, which took three to four days. Further, the working time of the workshop too had to be adjusted to limit to morning session daily, apparently due to lack of stamina of the TT for working long hours. These have to understood and taken into consideration in the organisation of training programs. Attempting to achieve too much in short periods may thwart the desired effects and results and even be counter productive.

b) **Planning programs.** The TTs were guided as to how programs should be planned, taking due consideration of the time factor and the resources available. To be ambitious would court disaster and may end up in failure. The drawing up schedules, linking with the local educational authorities, seeking support from the community etc. were some of the aspects to which their attention was drawn. The TTs were briefed and provided with the necessary skills related to use of local materials, mostly from the environment.

The process of conducting the workshop/training program and planning for the future

One should also note the emphasis of the activities of the MTs and TTs in the workshops would vary significantly from the beginning of the program towards the end. Initially the MT would take the lead in guiding the TTs but at later stages TT would lead the program and MTs would play a secondary role, in order to give more experience to the TTs . This will make the TT more confident to handle the training programs with the teachers, at later stages. The purpose of the change of emphasis from the MT to the TT is to provide the latter, as to how he should conduct his program with teachers at later stages. It is a process of relieving the MT from the main stage to the background and

avoid teacher domination and verbalism, a very common feature in classroom ex-
ample, as to how he should guide his teachers in their training programs. This is to avoid teacher domination and verbalism, a very common feature in classroom situationstions

Table 2 **Format of the Workshop**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Themes	Objectives	Sub-themes	Objectives for 3	Activities	Deve.formats for 5	Working on 6
MT	MT	MT/TT	TT/MT	TT/MT	MT	TT/MT

Using the above format a program could be developed to cover the entire period. An example of such a program is given below. It should be remembered that the initial phase of these activities should be worked out slowly, in view of the possible difficulties of understanding of the new approaches by the TT. One should not rush ambitiously.

Table 3 **Example of a program**

Activity	Duration	Period dates	Who	Methods	Materials needed
1. Pre-test/ Intro.	01/2 day	open	MT	format/discuss	pre-test
2. Themes	1-2 days	open	MT	discussion	stationery
3. Objectives	2 days	open	TT/MT	discussion	writing board
4. Sub-themes	3 days	open	TT/MT	discussion group work	writing materials
5. Objectives sub-themes	1-2 days	open	TT/MT	as above	writing materials
6. Deve. activities	6days	open	TT/MT	as above/ plenary	as above

7. Deve. formats	5 days	open	TT/MT	guidance discussion group work plenary	as above
8. Working on formats	8 days	open	TT/MT	individually as above	materials needed for field work
9. Analysis of findings	2 days	open	TT/MT	as above	materials needed
10. Evaluation/ post test	1 day	open	TT/MT	group/ individually	post test

c) **Innovative approaches.** The complexity and negligence of education for over two decades in Afghanistan require imaginative approaches. The need to attract more children to schools, methods in relation to teaching, alternative approaches for supplementing materials, lack of basic needs are factors that demand highly innovative approaches. How to face undaunting challenges with almost no resources, demand innovative approaches. The attention of the TTs was drawn to these gaps and tasks that lay ahead of them.

d) **Methods and principles in working with adults.** Since the teachers were mature persons, the TTs were reminded about the importance of treating them as adults and not as children. Cooperation, consultation and acceptance of the ideas of the teachers would be important for better output. It was pointed out that their relationships with the teachers, during the training period, should be harmonious, so that the latter would adopt similar methods in teaching and dealing with their children in schools.

4. Evaluation of the workshop

At the end of the two months workshop an informal evaluation of the program was carried out. It indicated that the four main themes on which the workshop was based and the approaches adopted in the workshop were very relevant and practically useful in understanding the child in difficult situations.The details of the evaluation are as follows.

Understanding the child

1. Understood the importance of knowing the child before teaching him which is equally important as knowing the subject matter/contents
2. Realised that children grow at different levels and their personalities have to be respected
3. Understood the importance of the impact of the traumatic situations on the behavioural pattern and the psychology of the child
4. Understood why beating children should be avoided altogether

Methodology

1. For the first time the TT had learnt new methods, which were relevant and useful for them
2. The new methods are applicable in their districts
3. Adopting new methods of teaching and development of materials are very important
4. Understood the significance of practical work and field activities to better understanding of concepts
5. Realised the relevance of the relationship of concepts to that of methodology

Stress management

1. Understood the methods of identifying problems in the classroom
2. Realised the importance of classroom management and how it should be achieved
3. Understood the importance and the methods of linking with the community and parents
4. Realised the significance of knowing the culture of the community of the children
5. Realised the importance of the personality of the teacher in classroom management
6. Developed skills related to organisisng of training programs under difficult contexts.

5. Model development

The purpose of model development (MD) is to find the methods of using the right type of combinations to bring about better results in a project/activity. The alternative would be to carry out directly and widely a national/global program, which would be expensive and time consuming. Further, any omissions in the global activity cannot be rectified easily and would be subject to criticism. On the other hand MD would facilitate changes and involve less funds and require less time. Further, with necessary changes, one could replicate the model program, in selected areas for further refinement and subsequent application universally.

In Afghanistan teacher education has been conducted by a number of NGO's and occasionally supported by UN agencies. These have served a very useful purpose and helped to improve the quality of teaching. However, the methods adopted seem to remain rather traditional, without very much focussing on the key issues of the teachers and the students. Most of the, training programs have been confined to the eastern parts of Afghanistan whistle other areas have been deprived of this facility due to political reasons and accessibility. The Central Highlands is an area, which has been neglected for long periods, even during times when normality prevailed in Afghanistan. Most of the people in this area have suffered from shortages in food and facilities for education. A large number of the people had migrated from this area, specially to Iran. Currently there is an increasing tendency for the refugees to return and one of their key needs relates to education. As they have been exposed to a better system of education in Iran, they expect the same type quality to be provided back in their districts, in the Central Highlands. This can be accomplished only through teacher education. Thus improving the quality of teachers remains an important and arduous task. Hence, UNOPS in collaboration with UNHCR and UNESCO, undertook a teacher training program based on the key issues, discussed earlier. The details of this approach have been described earlier.

The program followed a three stage development cascade, commencing from the training of master trainers in Peshawar (Pakistan) to training of trainers in Yakawlang with participants from the two adjoining districts, namely Panjao and Waras. The project aims to complete the training of all teachers in these districts, in two phases over a period of one year. The model, described earlier, that would emerge would be a result of this exercise, which will be completed by June 1999.

The plan of this model would be as follows.

a) Each district to train around 20 teachers, commencing from late August to mid October, 1998 - 2nd phase to commence during winter, through to May, 1999

b) Duration of the program to be around 20 days, which includes 10 days of practice

c) Contents to include more on practical aspects and model lessons

d) Mid-evaluation of the program in October, 1998 for necessary course correction and re-orientation of the TT

e) Commence scaling, depending on funds and needs from July, 1999

The selection of a part of the central highland area by UNOPS for a model development in teacher education is very relevant and technically sound. The significance of this selection relates to a) selection of a very deprived area in Afghanistan b) adoption of issue specific approaches c) planning for follow up of the program d) planning for training of all the teachers in the three districts, namely Yakawalang, Panjao and Waras e) involvement of the local authorities.

Conclusion

The issues of teaching/learning in Afghanistan could be the most complex one could find any where in the world. In such an environment the conventional approaches would find it difficult to have an impact on the spread of education. Highly innovative practices have to be identified, giving due regard to culture and traditional ways of learning. These seem to play an important role in societies which are emerging from traditional and conservative backgrounds. Such societies are sensitive to outside elements and if one is not careful, attempts to be very progressive will end up in smoke. It is in this context the above materials have been presented. The role of the teacher is very vital in a society like Afghanistan, for he may be the only educated person in a whole village. Hence, his capacity has to be strengthened and relevant skills developed. These relate to understanding the child, as well as managing learning in stressful environments. The documents attempts to provide guidelines to the key issues that confront the teacher in his operations in a conflict society.

theories and practices are developed in these countries based on local issues. Hence problems occur at the classroom level, for both the teacher, who has a mono-delivery system, and the student, who has his own ways of learning. This clash of understanding between the teacher and the student seems to be the order of the day. Teachers rarely or never realises the issues related to the problems of the child. The only option for the student is to leave the formal system. Thus irrelevant teaching breeds discontent and frustration and children who complete primary school seem to be less creative members of the community than if they had never been to school. They form part of the 'schooled illiterates'. In most situations, the principal and the teacher do not reflect on these issues as there seems to be no dearth of students in the school, which is always full. As they follow 'maintenance management', i.e. managing the status quo, and never venture to undertake innovations, the issues related to quality of learning and understanding of the individual needs of the child becomes secondary or is even forgotten Lack of focus of the teacher on issues that affect the learning process of the child beyond the classroom, is another fatal characteristic of these teachers.

Afghan contexts

Afghanistan which has undergone innumerable social, political turmoils and continues to be the same, is diagnostically a complicated patient. Hence a solution to one problem has led to more problems complicating the issues further over the last two decades, without a final solution having being found. The country is saddled with so many problems that no one is sure where to begin and how to commence sorting out the issues. Education is one of the key areas that suffers from all deprivations. Most of the educational structures have either been destroyed or are dysfunctional. Lack of professional growth and enrichment of the educational personnel over two decades is one of the glaring deficiencies in system. This is in addition to needs related to materials, infra structure, text books etc. These are burning issues, some of which may require funding of a high very order, beyond the resources and capacities of the international community. Hence, it is important to prioritise the needs and attend to the strategic ones that may compensate some of the other shortcomings, till such time that adequate resources are available. The needs that demand relatively less funds can help the student to achieve proficiency in the key skills and attract the students to stay longer in the formal system should be given priority. Learning in the classroom should be more student friendly.

How can this be achieved? Teacher education plays a major role in this. It is a key area which with relatively little inputs, can improve the capacity of the teacher to guide students skillfully, and develop a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom. Such guidance of students will bring about better results. Properly designed programs for teachers, taking care of issues related to contextual learning and understanding of the child's environment, should be the first step in this direction.

A number of questions could be raised in this connection. What are the key aspects that should be taken into consideration in the development of a teacher education program for Afghanistan? What are the gaps that have been created over the years in the education system, specially in teacher education? In the designing of a teacher education programs, what are the specific skills that should be emphasised? How could teacher education be designed to fill gaps and reduce costs ?

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* technical assistance to documents 1-6 was provided by the author

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Workshop Program Phase I

Planning Session for Training of Trainers
Peshawar – 1 – 5 June, 1998

Planning - 1-2 June

Contents - 3-5 June

Themes - 1. Understanding the child in conflict environments

2. Concept and contextual oriented teaching methodology

Day 1 - 1 June 1998

Part I

(A) Why plan ? (30 mts.)

- to achieve objectives
- to identify needs/materials
- to allocate times to different sections/themes
- to maximise use of time
- to maximise use of resources
- to identify constraints
- to make changes
- to know the budgetry needs
- to know what,whom,when and why

(B) Objectives of this session (45 mts.) (1hr.15mts)

1. to assist the trainers to plan the training programme for 4 weeks
2. to plan your work and work your plan
3. to develop methods of winning friends and influencing people
4. to train in the same way teachers would teach their children

(C) Methodology (1 hr.) (2hrs.15 mts.)

Understand the background of the community

- focus on the current situation of the central highlands
- focus on the deprived nature of the children/community in relation to
- services/accessibility/deprivations related to materials/basic needs/
- understand the cultural background of the people of the central highlands

Identifying overall objectives of the workshop

- assist in development of a learning culture
- development of skills of teachers to understand children under stress
- developing skills related to concept based teaching/learning
- providing skills related to use of local resources
- developing skills of classroom management

Part II

(D) Time budgeting (1hr.30mts.) (3hrs.45mts.)

Planning on time budgeting

- focus on themes

Identify the objectives of each theme

- desegregate each theme into sub themes

Develop activities on the sub themes

Part III

(E) Organisation (1 hr.) (4hrs.45mts.)

Look for the basic facilities available in the workshop premises

Identify places for field work based on the requirements of the contents

- organise necessary materials/

Adopt individual/group activities

- teachers to plan lessons for various subjects/ detail classroom activities on the lessons

- develop group activities as models to be carried out in classroom situations

- use plenary sessions for exchanges of experiences

Provide opportunities for teachers to display their capacities/experiences

Part IV

(F) Innovative practices (1hr.15 mts) (6 hrs.)

Methods of encouraging innovations

Day 2- 2 June, 1998

Part V

Develop formats (3 hrs.)

- innovative teaching lessons/evaluation methods
- practical/field work
- coordination with communities/resource persons

Part VI

(G) Methods/principles of working with adult groups (1 hr.) (4 hrs).

- understanding adult psychology
- limitations of the teachers capacities due to constraints/nature of the child/ remuneration's/facilities/conflicts
- adopt interactive methods/listen equally to teachers/commence from what they know
- develop/adopt checklists to asses progress

Part VI I

(H) Developing the plan (3 hrs.) (7 hrs.)

Workshop Programme- Phase II
Peshawar/ Yakwalang

1. Dates - 1-3 July, 1998 Peshawar
- 7-13 July,1998 Yakawlang, Bamyon Province

2. Objectives -
1. To continue the phase 1 teacher trainer workshop
2. To focus on classroom practices, methodology of teaching and developing materials

This workshop is a continuation of the previous one held at the same venues in June 1998. The master teacher training programme takes place in Peshawar where MT from Solidarite Afghanistan Belgium (SAB) will be guided to conduct the workshop for a period of one month. These MT would train the teacher trainers in Yakwalang thereafter. As with the previous group the MTs would be guided at the field level further for one week (7-13 July). The programme is organised and funded by UNOPS with Technical support from UNHCR, as agreed upon earlier. (please refer to my earlier mission/workshop report- msr12)

3. Programme in Peshawar

1st day - 1st July

Theme 111 - Concept based analysis of text books

9.00 –12.00 am

- study of text books from grade 1-6 in all subjects
- identify key concepts/contents
- indicate objectives for each concept

1.30 – 5.00 pm

- develop explanatory notes for the teacher
- analyse teachers tasks in relation to the concepts/contents
- provide detail instructions about student activities

2nd day - 2nd July

9.00 – 10.30 am

11.00 – 12.30

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- develop methods of evaluation

1.30 - 5.00 pm

Theme 1V Developing teaching materials based on local resources/materials

- identifying materials needed in relation to concepts and key ideas in the lessons for all grades/subjects

3 rd day 3 rd July

9.00 – 12.30 and 1.30 – 3.30

- developing samples of materials for a selected concepts/key ideas

3.30 – 5.00 pm

- planning/briefing for Yakawalang workshop

4. Programme in Yakawlang

7 July,1998 departure to Yakawalang
(detail planing of the programme for 01 month has been conducted during the phase 1 in June)

8 – 13 July, 1998 - guiding the MTs in their initial activities with the TT

14 July,1998 - return to Islamabad (depending on the flights)

ARIC

The tremendous sufferings of the Afghans over long periods relate to migrations, internal displacements, destruction of both physical and social structures, loss of resource personnel, closure of schools and dysfunctional systems of governance. The psychosocial implications of these traumas have a tremendous impact on the lives of the people. Loss of beloved ones, lack of cover for basic needs, internal disputes and external pressures keep on mounting daily in various forms and complexities for the people. Crisis and conflicts are thus perennial factors that prevail in the Afghan society.

In the development of a TE program these are some of the key factors that should be considered to make the training program relevant and issue specific. However, one should not be over ambitious but remain cautious about what can be achieved, due to problems related to locations of schools, which are far away from each other, lack of basic materials and other logistical issues. The terms 'relevant, issue specific, educational needs' have to be understood properly in Afghan contexts, as these are commonly used. Otherwise the use of these words tends to become superficial in application. Relevance refers to actions that are appropriate and suitable to make a situation understood better. Issue specific, refers to understanding the elements of a situation precisely. Educational needs would be the materials and other requirements needed to enhance teaching/learning.

Approaches adopted

In Afghanistan most teachers have not undergone either pre-service or in-service training programs. As such almost every teacher has been deprived of exposure to the latest methodologies. Even those trained, received their training a long time ago and due to lack of subsequent in-service training and access to resource materials their knowledge is likely to be out-of-date. It may be true that even if trained the methods provided may not be specific to Afghan situations. Hence the need for updating the knowledge and skills, focussing on context. This applies to both teachers and teacher educators. The pedagogical institutes of Afghanistan lack basic necessities and lack the inputs for quality training, guidance and exposures to new thinking. It would take sometime for these institutes to provide professional expertise to the teacher community in Afghanistan. These make it imperative for undertaking teacher training programs by UN and NGO's.

The initiative

It is in this background that UNOPS, in collaboration with UNHCR, planned a teacher training program for teachers in the in the Central Highlands, specifically in Yakwalang district of Afghanistan. It should be mentioned that this region is one of the most remotely located areas in Afghanistan, facing difficulties related to accessibility and isolation, specially in winter. The schools are located far and wide, with few qualified teachers. Lack of basic needs are a common feature in the schools of this area. These include text books, stationery, furniture, salaries of teachers etc. However, a positive factor in this gloomy situation relates to the keen interest of the community to provide education to their children, both girls and boys. They see education as one way out of this perennial impasse of the development of the country and their communities.

The methodology of the plan

The program of training trainers had two main components. The first stage was training of master trainers (MT), from Peshawar based two NGO's, namely from Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and Solidarite Aghanistan Belgium (SAB). They were trained for a period of eight days in Peshawar. The second stage of the training program was for the teacher trainers (TT), numbering seven, from districts of Yakwalang, Waras and Punjab. They were trained by the MT's for a period of eight weeks in Yakwalang, under the guidance of the Basic Education Adviser from UNHCR.



Master Trainers seen guided by the Basic Education Adviser, in Peshawar

These TT would undertake to train the teachers in their districts at the end of their training. Initially, around 25 teachers from each of the above districts would be trained during the first three months. There after a mid term review of the training program would be undertaken. These experiences would be made use of to refine the training program further.

The objectives of this training program were to

1. develop concept specific teaching skills in the primary grades,
2. provide guidance in methods of concept of teaching and
3. develop a teacher education model for Afghanistan.

2 Key themes

In the design of the themes consideration was given entirely to the educational issues needs of the country. These were specifically developed to provide guidance to some of the current teaching/learning problems faced by the students and teachers in Afghanistan. It should be stated that a deliberate attempt was made to move away from the traditional education programs. These themes are as follows.

1. Understanding the child in conflict situations
2. Classroom management under stress
3. Concept oriented teaching methodology
4. Concept based teaching materials

In addition to the above themes, the MT's were guided how to plan a two month workshop inside Afghanistan, specifically in Yakwalang, Central Highlands. This was considered to be very necessary in order that they will use the time available for both theory and practice. The details of the planning session are discussed at the end of this document.

I. Understanding the child in conflict situations

Why conflict and what are conflicts ?

Afghanistan has been under conflicts and will continue to be so for some time. These conflicts are complex in nature and are results of both external and internal struggles. They could be observed at a macro level, as well as at the micro level. Conflicts of a macro level have brought in a trail of disaster to the Afghans and affected every sector in the society. At the micro level conflicts relate to love and hate relationships, personal animosities. All these have led to psychosocial disturbances, affecting both the young and old. The traumas and the damages created amongst the younger ones are likely to be irreparable. The experiences of youth would be related to seeing rapes, deaths, torture, coerced violence, separation of families etc. all of which have made the younger generation sick physically and mentally. It requires great effort to resurrect them from these shocks.

In such an environment the focus of education programs should be more to facilitate the teacher in the understanding of the conflicts of the child, rather than the traditional approach of teaching and guiding the teachers on child psychology per se. In this training program equal emphasis was laid on the sociological aspects as well. Under the traditional teacher education programs, the study of the child is of a general nature, information of which is true and applicable to any child, in any society. Further, information gathered from such knowledge does not help the teacher to be practical and assist in analysing the causes for deviant and abnormal behaviour of the child, and or, in helping the child to overcome his problems. It is in this light that a new approach was designed to enable the teacher to look at issues of the Afghan child, from the point of view of conflicts.

The MTs were guided to obtain the necessary skills, discussed later, to proceed in this new direction, with emphasis on psychosocial aspects of conflicts. The academic knowledge they had acquired in their formal pedagogical training and perceived realities in the field were brought together to understand this new approach.

The theme, 'Understanding the child under conflicts', was further analysed and through deliberations a number of sub-themes were identified. This exercise helped the participants to think logically about the details of the conflicts better and delve deeper to understand the background in the context of Afghanistan. The process improved the skills of the MTs. which led them to

a) perceive the realities in the context of the Afghan environment,

b) provide an opportunity for discussion amongst the MTs,

c) test theoretical knowledge/information to verify practical problems and vice versa,

d) high light issues that would have been considered insignificant and frivolous under normal circumstances,

e) redefine conflicts in the light of the socio-cultural environments and political instabilities vis-a-vis the child,

f) understand the importance of integration in learning,

g) develop the abilities to explore the use of local resources,

h) re-define psychology in the Afghan contexts and

I) develop new hypothesis related to learning of children under conflicts.

The sub-themes identified for the theme 'Understanding the child in conflict environments' are as follows. However, these should not be considered as final and many more could be identified. The advantage of this approach is that the number of the sub-themes could be determined according to the time framework of the training program. The longer the duration of the workshop, the greater the facility for desegregating the main theme.

Sub-themes

1. Defining conflict environments (CE)
2. Circumstances under which conflicts originate in Afghanistan
3. What are the key elements of CE?
4. Identifying the major victims of CE
5. Factors that affect the child
6. Security problems leading to the conflicts in the minds of children
7. Conflicts in children resulting from economic issues
8. Health issues leading to conflicts in children
9. Education issues affecting the child
10. Community problems leading to conflicts in children
11. Psychosocial conflicts in children resulting from physical disabilities
12. Psychological problems in relation to conflict situation
13. Problems of children forced to leave the environment of the school and the community.

14. The role of the elders and institutions (teacher/principal/parents/guardians/ religious leaders/education system) in resolving the traumas of the conflicts of children
15. Role of counseling and guidance for the Afghan children



Children facing conflicts and undergoing stress

Examples of explanations for some of the above sub-themes

1. Defining conflict environments in the context of the child (sub theme 01 above)

- family child separation and causes for separation, voluntary /involuntary
- involuntary separations relating to abductions, lost, orphaned, run away, removed etc.,
- voluntary separations relating to abandoned, entrusted, surrendered, independent etc.

Some of the questions raised at the workshop in relation to the above were as follows.

⇒ do unaccompanied children exist?,
⇒ why are children separated from their families?,
⇒ which children are at risk of being separated from their families?,
⇒ what measurers would help to prevent the separation?,
⇒ what measurers are needed to meet the needs of unaccompanied children?,
⇒ what measurers will ensure the effectiveness of the services?
⇒ what are the long term and short term measurers that should be undertaken in the
⇒ schools to ensure protection and resolve conflicts?

2. Factors that affect the child (sub theme 05 above)

The following were some of the distress signs identified.

◊ thoughts and feelings of shame for being alive relate to guilt, pessimistic outlook, inability to concentrate, nightmares, depression, sadness extended time, panic attacks, fears of separation etc.
◊ individual behavioural characteristics relate to hyperactivity, nervous ticks, over dependence, easily moved to tears, sleeping difficulties, regressive behaviour, thumb sucking etc.
◊ social interactive characteristics relate to indication of social isolation, aggressive behaviour, defiance etc.
◊ physiological changes relate to headaches, weight loss, loss of energy, no appetite etc.

3. Health issues of the child (sub theme 08 above)

A number of questions related to the following could be raised in this connection,

such as

- the major health problems of the child, health and learning problems, relationship between health and traumas, extent of the awareness of the mother about the health of the child, extent of the state of malnutrition of the child, understanding the risks of injury, illness, disability, importance of sanitary habits etc.

4. Education issues of the child

The key questions that could be raised in relation to education are

- which children are not receiving education and why?
- which children are at risk of having their education disrupted?
- what measurers would prevent disruption of education?
- what are the emergency services that should be provided to children?
- what innovative strategies should be adopted to overcome these problems?
- what short term measurers should be adopted to restore the functioning of the education programs?

The above 4 areas are examples of details of the issues that confront the child in stressful and conflict situations. Based on these facts the TT were guided to conduct quick action studies (QAS) from the vicinity, to strengthen their understanding and skills and develop capacities, as well as their confidence. The QAS required simple formats to gather information and developing these too was a new dimension in their learning .The QAS made the TT to understand, the significance of research focus for effective teaching/learning, for the first time in their teaching career..

Examples of a few QAS

1. Study the causes of disturbances of a selected few families
2. Study the methods of interventions undertaken by organisations in a village
3. Case studies of few selected children under stress including girls
4. Priorities in resolving these conflicts

The intervention priorities for resolving priorities could be provided from technical specialists, specialised local resource persons, local resource persons, and families.

The third step in this direction was the **development of objectives** for each of the sub-themes. Identifying objectives for sub-themes makes the MTs know precisely what they should look for under each sub-theme to avoid confusion and repetition. This is yet another strategy adopted to bring clarity to the minds of the MTs, in this new approach of 'Understanding children under conflicts'. Otherwise, the tendency would be for the MTs to fall into the traditional path and processes of developing competencies, emphasising the psychological aspects, without developing the ability to use the knowledge in real contexts. This helped the MTs to understand to a great extent how to conduct the training program for the TT s (Yakwalang). Development of sub-themes also facilitated subsequent planing of lessons and development of materials. Further, it enabled them to get a clear picture of the integrated nature of the whole gamut of conflicts and its relationship to psychology.

It would be appropriate to provide an example of the objectives developed for a sub-theme at this workshop. The selected sub-theme for the development of objectives was 'defining conflict environments?' (sub theme 01 above). The objectives provide the reasons for identifying this sub-theme. These should explain how the sub-theme will assist in understanding the major theme. Clarification of the elements that go to form the conflicts would help the teacher to identify the relevant strategies to overcome these conflicts and bring about a culture of understanding and peace. It is a process of splitting the atom/element/idea until clarity is achieved. The emphasis in this is conflict. Thus the suggested objectives for this sub-theme would be as follows.

1. to identify the nature of conflicts in the context of the child
2. to understand the socio-cultural aspects of the environment
3. to find out what kind of peace existed prior to conflicts
4. to define conflict in the context of Afghan issues

The fourth step of this process was related to the **development of activities** for each of the sub-themes. These activities will be in keeping with the objectives developed for the sub-themes. It is expected that these activities will help the teachers to come into grips with the

I greatly appreciate the professional and organisational assistance received from the Heads of UNOPS, UNHCR, UNESCO, and from the two Directors of the NGO's, namely Swedish Committee for Afghanistan and Solidarite Afghanistan Belgium in conducting the program. The cooperation of the local department of education, Yakwalang is highly appreciated.

A special word of thanks to Ms Pippa Bradford, Regional Manager, Coordinator of the program (UNOPS), for the excellent co-ordination, Ms. Rosa Belen Agirregomezkorta and Mr. Bakr Hussain (UNESCO), Ms. Diana Porter for their assistance at the workshops, Dr. (Ms) Riyazul Anjum Haqu, Programme Specialist, UNESCO for editing the document and Mr. Shafiq Ahmed (UNOPS) for expediting the printing of the book.

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ISSUE FOCUSSED TEACHER EDUCATION

HAND BOOK FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS IN AFGHANISTAN



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S.B.Ekanayake Ph.D.

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Foreword

In Afghanistan education is one of the most neglected sections for almost two decades. It has affected the development process in an innumerable number of ways. Quality of life, lack of qualified personnel, increasing the dependency syndrome, migrations are but a few of these issues that have been caused due to lack of proper education for the Afghans. If this trend continues there will be no salvation for the people for decades to come and despondency will not only prevail but aggravated, beyond any solution.

Training of teachers is one of the key inputs that could be provided to improve the quality of teaching. It is relatively less costly but more effective to attract children to attend and stay in schools. In the Central Highlands of Afghanistan education had been much more neglected than elsewhere but the desire to provide education to all children, both boys and girls is very high amongst the community. The returnees from Iran, who had been exposed to better facilities for their children, have strengthened this. It is our view that the facilities for education should be improved so that the returnees would stay and not immigrate again.

Understanding the importance of education in the light of the above, UNOPS decided to plan a teacher education programme for the teachers in the Yakwalang region in the Central Highlands of Afghanistan. Teacher trainers from three districts, namely Waras, Panjao and Yakwalang, were participants in this two months workshop. At end of their training, it is expected that these teacher trainers would undertake training all their teachers in the respective districts. UNOPS collaborated with the department of education in organising this workshop. UNOPS considers this as an important initiative in the right direction and looks forward for further developments, as follow up work.

The collaborating partners in this teacher education workshop were UNHCR, UNESCO, and Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, Solidarite Afghanistan Belgium and the Department of Education, Yakwalang. UNHCR provided technical expertise for this programme through the services of Dr. S.B.Ekanayake, Basic Education Adviser. The two NGO's provided the Master Trainers, who underwent a special training for this purpose.

In this connection, I greatly appreciate the cooperation of UNHCR in providing technical assistance and also the support of Messers Rosa Gul, Chief Technical Adviser, SCA and Amir Mohammad Ahmadi, Director SAB for providing the master trainers. A special word of thanks to Ms Pippa Bradford, Regional Coordinator, UNOPS Afghanistan and Ms Diana Porter, for coordinating the programme very successfully.

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22 July 1998

PREFACE

This book on ' Issue focussed teacher education' (IFTE) is a very timely document, to provide answers to some of the woefully outstanding issues on education in Afghanistan. Of the many problems in Afghanistan, lack of proper education seems to be the key issue, in terms of the future development of the country. It is well known that no nation has arisen beyond the level of its education and so long as it remains ignored, unattended, national development will not be compromised.

Another the key issue of Afghanistan relates to the migration, which is causing immense problems to the neighbouring countries. For two decades the neighbours have been hosting refugees and the latter have benefited, inter alia, educational facilities. As a result there is increasing demand for better education inside Afghanistan for them to return. It has become, therefore, the responsibility of the international community to provide such facilities to attract them. Such a policy will certainly pay greater dividends in the future in terms of easing and solving the pressures of the refugee problem in neighbouring countries.

In this, UNHCR is very appreciative of the initiative taken by UNOPS to start this well thought out teacher education program for the teachers in the Central Highlands. I am confident that this effort could provide the base for a model, as indicated in the book, on teacher education in Afghanistan. UNHCR would profit by this endeavor, as well as those organisations, involved in education, for mere provision of materials alone would not improve the quality of education.

The collaboration between UNHCR and UNOPS should be further strengthened to continue to other areas. In this connection, I appreciate the technical support provided by Dr. S.B.Ekanayake, Basic Education Adviser, UNHCR, who had conceptualised the needs of the Afghans and developed the training package, including the training of the trainers.

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22 July 1998

Introduction

"Before you teach John, know John," is a well known saying. The environment of the child plays an important role in `knowing' the child. In the context of Afghanistan, both these aspects have been lost or ignored in the education system over the two decades of conflicts. In addition, problems related to classroom operations like lack of exposure to any form of training or professional guidance have compounded these further. Consequently both micro-teaching operations and explicit employment of pedagogical strategies that encourage the progressive mastery of skills by children have never been imparted to the teachers. Education has received only lip service from the rulers throughout the recent past.

In such a scenario a long time is required to meet all the needs of the education system, in order to service the needs of materials, textbooks, furniture, buildings, teacher's etc., to the satisfaction of the authorities. However, teachers could be guided to develop skills that would cover the key inputs required for teaching/ learning. This book 'Issue focus teacher education' (IFTE) attempts to fill this gap. The contents recommeneded positive approaches, which are within the capacity of the teachers and their environment. Thus ' understanding the child in conflict situations' focuses on the importance of psychosocial factors as a pre-requisite to teaching. The focus of the teacher is directed to the nature of the problem and the methods that could be adopted to identify and provide solutions to the conflicts affecting children. 'Classroom management under stress' attempts to redefine stress in a classroom situation, which affects the teacher and the student. It focuses on the sources and methods of identification of stress. The objective is to make the teacher aware of the issues and alert to these aspects. The approach of IFTE is innovative focussing on concept based approaches and the importance of micro blocks of knowledge in teaching/ learning. The concept approach helps the teacher to look into the microelements of a learning situation and suitably develop strategies to explain these. This approach helps the learner to understand what is taught better because it follows small blocks of learning, split from the main block of knowledge. Developing materials based on concepts follows this section. The teacher is able to understand better and clearly why, when and how materials should be developed and used for the children when a concept based approach is followed. In addition contents include a section on planning so that the teacher trainers would be able to organise their training programs in the respective districts.

The program follows a three stage development cascade. Firstly, an initial training of master trainers was conducted in Peshawar, for a period of eight days, followed by training of teacher trainers in Yakwalang, Bamyon province located in the Central Highlands of Afghanistan for two months. The final stage takes place in the respective districts namely Yakwalang, Waras and Panjao, over a period of nine months, starting in August. It is planned to monitor the field program so that any mid-course changes can be made to develop it into a model for other areas, when possible.